Allotment of PCO/ISD/STD in Assam

2614. SHRIMATI BASANTI SARMA: Will the MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of applications pending with Government for allotment of PCO/ISD/STD in the various cities of Assam and since when; and

(b) the details of such PCO/ISD/STD sanctioned and allotted by Government in the State during the last three years?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR) : (a) A total of 194 applications are pending for allotment of STD/ISD/PCOs in Assam. The oldest application is pending since 24th November, 1994.

(b) 5872 STD/ISD/PCOs have been installed in the State of Assam during the last three years *i.e.* 1998-99, 1999-2000 and 2000-2001.

Foreign Tours of Officers/Employees of the Department of Communications

†2615. SHRI MUNAVVAR HASAN: Will the MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) the names and designations of the officers/employees of the Department of Communications/Bharat Sanchar Nigam/Mahanagar Telephone Nigam Ltd. proceeded on foreign tours during the last three months; and

(b) the names of the countries visited by each officer/employee and what were the purposes of the visit and achievements of those visits and the amount spent on each visit, separately ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR) : (a) and (b) The details are given in the Annexure [*See* Appendix 194, Annexure No. 23].

Utilization of Post Office Network

2616. SHRI C. P. THIRUNAVUKKARASU: Will the MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to utilize vast network of post offices in retail financial services and products of different entities;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the department has reached on any agreement with private parties in this regard;

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(d) if so, revenue generated from these agreements; and

(e) the areas where these additional revenues would be utilised?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR) : (a) to (e) Yes, Sir. The Department of Posts has entered into agreement with private and public sector organisations for retailing their financial services like distribution of mutual funds and micro-credit, electronic fund transfer and international money transfer. These arrangements have been done recently and the revenue earned by the department can be gauged only after sometime. Revenue so earned is credited to Government account.

Long distance service segment for competition

2617. SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH : Will the MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have accepted recommendations of TRAI on opening up of the international long distance service segment for competition;

(b) if so, what are the recommendations and the decision taken thereon; and

(c) what would be the over all impacat of this decision?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The Government have accepted the recommendations of TRAI on opening up of the international long distance service segment for competition. The details of the recommendations are given in the Statement. (*See* below)

(c) The introduction of competition in International Voice Traffic is expected to provide more efficient and better quality service at more affordable rates to the subscribers.

Statement

Important Details of recommendations of Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) for grant of licence for International Long Distance

- Unrestricted entry.
- All bearer services to be provided by the Licensee.
- Entry fee of Rs. 25 crores.